THE
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&
GAVEL

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Feature Articles

In the Classroom

Welcome to Volume 8 of The Mask and Gavel, the official peer-reviewed publication of the JALT Performance in Education SIG! The editorial staff and contributing authors have worked hard to once again put forth a stellar edition. This new volume includes a good mix of research articles and classroom ideas that provide much food for thought for readers who would like to incorporate aspects of performance into their teaching. Although we changed our name from the Speech, Drama and Debate SIG to the PIE SIG last year, you will still find articles here related to speech, drama, and debate, which really are the main types of performance that we concern ourselves with in this SIG.

This issue includes research articles on process drama and online debate, as well as ideas for using movies, debate and drama (screenplay) in the classroom. This past year was a remarkable year for our SIG. One of the main highlights was our first PIE: Research and Practice Conference that included a student showcase and student performances. As we move forward into the future as the PIE SIG, The Mask and Gavel will continue to be a vehicle where our members can share teaching ideas, and examine and research how different kinds of performance can be utilized in the classroom to motivate, deepen understanding and make learning fun. Enjoy the read!

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JALT PIE SIG Coordinator

Process Drama and Teacher in Role in ELT

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Abstract

This paper is a discussion of the potential of using specific drama techniques during English lessons at a Japanese private senior high school. The techniques in focus are process drama and specifically teacher in role (TiR). TiR is a specific technique that is often used in the broader area of process drama. Process drama concerns itself more with the experiential rather than the performance aspect of drama. In it, a teacher, or facilitator, goes into role with the participants in the co-construction of extended role-plays and dramas. Such methods have been used in English language teaching by many practitioners. The methods are discussed in this paper, with the focus on their suitability for teaching in a Japanese senior high school.

A recent project of mine investigated the potential for using elements of drama during the English lessons at a Japanese private senior high school. The broader drama element in question was process drama. This approach has a focus on the process of longer interconnected role-plays and simulations. It is an open-ended approach that is co-constructed by all participants. This authorship potential means that the students involved can invent facts to develop the drama. Process drama is closely associated with the use of 'teacher in role' (TiR). This refers to the teacher being directly involved in role-plays. Using TiR, the teacher can serve a facilitating function both in and out of role in the drama. I would like to discuss some relevant literature, and also share some observations from my project in this article. Before focusing on the literature, it would be useful to briefly describe the setting where the project took place.

The high school where I work prides itself on guiding students through Japanese university entrance exams. The perception is that these exams are the gateway to future academic and professional opportunity. Therefore, they are of paramount significance. Some educators have noted the difficulty in Japan of reconciling the need to attain examination success within a curriculum that adheres to the principles of communicative language teaching. Seargeant (2009), for example, contends that the drive towards exam success is "incompatible" with communicative approaches (p. 52). In this atmosphere of constant testing and preparation there is often a focus on grammatical structure rather than the context in which the language takes place. The rationale behind my advocacy of TiR and process drama was that such an experiential teaching approach might help to redress the balance in which grammar appeared to be privileged over the situational context of language use.

Process Drama and TiR

It would be worthwhile to frame the use of process drama and TiR within the broader context of drama in ELT. Useful links could be drawn between drama activities and linguistic theory. In particular, such activities have a contextualizing potential. Support for the importance of context can be found within functional grammar theory. This advocates for the embedding of language study within the situation in which that language takes place: "any naturally occurring stretch of language should, to a greater or lesser extent, come trailing clouds of context with it" (Thompson, 2004, p. 10). Drama, also, cannot exist in a vacuum and is usually inseparable from language and communication. Therefore, the utilization of elements of drama could be seen as a more meaningful way into language study than the detached focus on morphological features, as was often found in my teaching environment.

The process drama approach was developed from educational drama, and TiR has been described as one of its hallmarks (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p. 26). Kao and O'Neill researched the application of drama techniques to L2 teaching. They make a distinction between activities that are more autonomous and learner centered, and others that are teacher led and less satisfactory. They see such activities as the simple memorization of short scripts that do not challenge the learner a great deal as being of the latter variety (1998, p. 6). However, more challenging activities that

require greater involvement and commitment from the learners are what they see as natural and negotiable, and therefore beneficial. Kao and O'Neill firmly place process drama in this category. They claim that process drama is more, "concerned with the development of a wider context for exploration – a dramatic world created by the teacher and students working together within the experience" (1998, p. 12). The tool used to place the teacher in the drama is TiR, which Winston suggests is excellent for, "unsettling the normal power relations in the classroom and allows the teacher and the children to engage in forms of questioning and answering with the kind of emotional edge that ordinary teacher-pupil discussion cannot manage" (2011, p. 152). TiR does not always have to be enacted with younger learners. The dynamic between teachers and adult learners could also be affected.

An example of the extended nature of process drama can be found in Rothwell (2015). She describes a 20-week project. In her study, a group of (mostly) 12-year old learners were investigating the effects of an involuntary migration to another country. In addition to the migration, learners had to deal with using an L2 (German). Various techniques were utilized in this study, contributing to its comprehensiveness (Rothwell, 2015, pp. 342-344). The tasks could be divided into three distinct preparatory, experiential, and reflective phases. Among the preparatory activities included the writing of family biographies for the migrants who would be sailing from Brisbane to Germany. Experiential tasks included the learners having to give details about themselves in the L2 as they boarded the boat, and a whole class role-play in which the students were involved in a protest meeting against the ship's captain (the researcher-TiR), confronting her about the food shortage on the ship. Finally, among the reflective tasks included an activity where learners observed a video of themselves having their immigration assessment interviews. In this activity, the students were focusing on not only their language use but also their emotional state within the experiential activity.

O'Neill argues for the heightened agency of this approach. She claims that optimum educational and aesthetic potential occurs when participants are involved in the co-construction of the event and in the negotiation of meaning (1985, p. 160). O'Neill goes on to give examples of co-construction and negotiation (p. 163). In her examples, details about an imagined resistance fighter against a totalitarian regime were co-constructed by a group of British teenagers. The details were

elicited in a whole class role-play rather than just given to them in the form of instructions beforehand. In addition, the instructor did not impose her interpretation of events on the learners. Rather, learners were invited to give their own reactions, or meanings, to the dramatic world created. Accordingly, teachers would be responsible for the preparation of the original stimulus. Following this, teachers would also be open to possible new learner generated input as the process drama continues. Overall, process drama can be seen as nurturing collaborative skills that may lead to the development of the ability to look for solutions.

Kao and O'Neill also highlight the importance of some "internal tension" that leads to greater participant generated speech and action (1998, p. 71). O'Toole defines this tension as, "the gap between the characters and the fulfillment of their purposes" (1992, p. 27). A good example of tension can be seen above in the protest meeting from Rothwell's study (2015, pp. 347-348). The tension here was created by the students' desire to improve their situation and their recognition that they were involved in a risky confrontation with their teacher in role as the ship's captain. The real (classroom), and the imagined (ship) situation impacted on the dynamic of the exchanges.

The ELT Drama Project

The TiR technique within a process drama approach was used in a group of five 50-minute sessions in which I was the teacher and eight of the Japanese English teachers were group members. The sessions took place over a period of six weeks. The term 'members' will be used as this was neither a formal research project nor a series of in-service training sessions. It is hoped that this term will serve to reflect the democratic nature of the project. The drama was based on a scenario from Harmer (2003, p. 273). In it, members adopted roles as various notable people from world history. The following figure summarizes the different stages.

Figure 1

Hot Air Balloon Process Drama

Stages
Choosing / Researching (Preparatory)   Members chose 8 historical figures (notables) they felt had made positive contributions to humanity. Details about them were brainstormed and researched.
Boarding Hot Air Balloon (Experiential)   Members (in role as notables) justified their positions on the balloon set to travel above a dangerous stretch of sea to an imaginary conference.
Language Focus (Reflective)   Members discussed strategies speakers had used in justifying their place on the balloon. Focus on linguistic choices.
Bad News (Experiential)   News came that there was not enough food to reach the destination. The pilot (TiR) delivered this news suggesting they were left with the choice of either throwing one notable overboard, or the likelihood that they would all 'perish'. The rationale was that the person who had done the least for humanity would be sacrificed.
Drafting Speeches (Preparatory)   Members worked in pairs, drafting speeches that the notables would make to defend their continued presence on the balloon.
Speech Competition (Experiential)   Members delivered their speeches in role, and voted for who should be 'sacrificed'.
Final Thoughts (Reflective)   Members discussed the speeches and whether there could have been different options to throwing someone overboard. Finally, there was a whole class discussion about the feasibility of using process drama and TiR in their mainstream classes.

The Impact of the Project

Within the experiential phases, members were hesitant at first about how much agency to exert regarding the co-constructed nature of process drama. However, some of them became enthusiastic in this regard, finding that their contributions were usually accepted and developed. An example of this came in the 'boarding' stage when members were asked to suggest features of the stretch of sea that they were to travel above. At first they were hesitant about making suggestions. After gentle prompting, members came up with details such as the stretch being "shark infested" and "icy cold". In addition, members seemed prepared not to follow conventional social niceties. For example, there was a brief impasse between the pilot and some members in the 'bad news' stage as to whether it was really necessary to throw someone overboard. This mirrored Rothwell's protest meeting (2015) that was mentioned earlier (pp. 347-348). Namely, members appeared to be prepared to take part in risky exchanges with the project leader, which could have been interpreted as challenging his authority.

Kao and O'Neill suggest that teachers can offer linguistic support within process drama, and that the roles they take can, "enable them to diagnose the students' language skill and understanding" (1998, p. 71). An example of this type of support occurred when the pilot (TiR) was able to naturally suggest the word 'bribery', which members seemed to be searching for. This happened as the achievements of John F. Kennedy were being discussed during 'boarding', in which members were obliged to justify their place on board to begin with. The vocabulary item was added without disrupting the role-play. Moreover, Kao and O'Neill also suggest that greater focus could be on the preparatory and reflective stages of ELT process dramas in more exam-oriented classes (1998, p. 122). Hence, teachers would be free to use their judgement regarding how much time to allow for preparatory, experiential, and reflective activities respectively. In addition, teachers can judge the appropriate amount of language focus that should be in preparatory and reflective phases.

Despite the benefits described in this article, it must be noted that there are some problematic issues linked to the usage of process drama and TiR in ELT. Concern was often expressed that a focus on grammatical accuracy was being neglected in these activities. In addition, many members felt that they would not be able to lead lessons in a style where they would be

required to manage classes in such a multi-layered fashion. As well as focusing on L2 teaching, there is a heavy burden on the skill or the "artistry" of the teacher and this could be problematic (Dunn & Stinson, 2011, p. 617). Framed such as this, teachers would need to develop an ability to manage and plan interesting and engaging contexts for language learning through drama, while also being able to maintain the flexibility to react appropriately and skillfully when unpredictable things happen within role-plays that could open the door for rich new directions. Dunn and Stinson (2011) suggest that applying drama in L2 instruction requires multi-tasking ability from the teacher in at least four fields, "actor, director, playwright and teacher" (p. 630). Additionally, the need to attend to linguistic matters in exam-orientated classes is obvious. This does seem to require a lot of skill from the teacher and may not be possible in many situations. Furthermore, there can be issues where some researchers have felt that focusing too much on the language points has a negative effect on engagement (Dunn & Stinson, 2011, p. 628). This could counter-balance the claim that accurate language use was being neglected.

Conclusion

I feel that I am by no means an expert practitioner of process drama within ELT. I could, for example, have exploited the situation more when there was an impasse between the pilot and some members as to whether it was really necessary to throw someone overboard during the 'bad news' stage. Perhaps the confrontation could have been mined more in an exploration of citizenship issues. Ultimately, individual teachers have to assess how realistic it would be to use process drama and TiR in their lessons. Moreover, teachers have to take into account the culture of their particular institution, and whether such techniques would be viewed as appropriate. However, I feel that the process drama approach is flexible enough to be used in exam-oriented classes providing there is a suitable balance in terms of preparatory, experiential and reflective tasks. The key factor is the necessity for linguistic focus in addition to the management of the drama itself. Furthermore, TiR is an excellent tool for exercising some control over inter-connected role-playing within ELT. In addition, the approach as a whole opens up exciting paths to continual development as a language-teaching practitioner.

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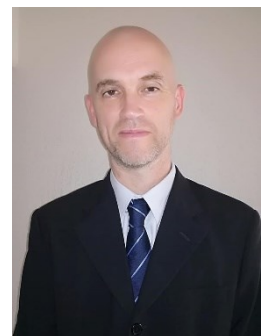
Japanese University Students' Experiences from Participating in an Unsupervised Google Classroom Debate Forum

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Abstract

A question of interest to language teachers who plan on utilizing an online debate forum as a research or teaching tool is "What do students who have participated in an online debate forum think of the activity?" This paper describes a study that focused on an online debate forum accessed through Google Classroom and reports the experiences of Japanese learners of English who used this unsupervised platform to practice their debate skills. The paper also reports improvements to the activity suggested by the participants for future studies.

F or some students, the ability to debate constructively in a conversation is necessary when arguing with their peers inside and outside the classroom. Although this situation is very prevalent, there is often much nervousness and lack of confidence involved. This may manifest when students are asked to properly challenge their peers' stance or support their own stance. Students do learn about the grammar involved in stance-support statements when they practice their expository writing, but there is often a lack of routine practice of debate when they must interact with their peers using such statements. Being able to properly support and challenge statements in a conversation is an important first step to developing a potential

relationship with a classmate. If learners are to develop confidence in these oftentimes unavoidable situations, they need to learn debate skills. Given the volume of online interaction among young people nowadays, and the increasing importance of computer-mediated language use by foreign language learners, online platforms have emerged as a viable form of English debate practice, particularly for useful group communication among classmates. Online platforms may also be referred to as "social media platforms," which may be defined as an internet-based site and service that promotes social interactions between participants (Page, Barton, Unger, & Zappavigna, 2014). Although video and audio interaction modes are also offered by a number of these online platforms, and use of them varies from culture to culture and from individual to individual, they may be seen primarily as a text-based medium or a text and visual content medium.

A research study involving Japanese ESL students' computer-mediated communication compared face-to-face debate to electronic debate and reported a tendency for students to have an increased rate of participation in electronic debate (Warschauer, 1995). A previous study in computer-assisted classroom debate, which showed the tendency for students to ask many more questions of other students than of the teacher when using that platform (Chun, 1994), may suggest that an online-debate forum is a practical method to motivate students to interact with their peers without the need for extensive teacher supervision. One such online platform is Google Classroom. Based on the success of prior research on small group collaborative activities (Zha, Kelly, Park, & Fitzgerald, 2006), I designed the online debate forum to promote debate-based communication in order to increase students' use of English in social situations. With the goal of understanding student perspectives towards a Google Classroom debate forum, students' experiences participating in an online debate were surveyed with a post-task questionnaire and their answers were analyzed.

Research Design

This section presents the research questions for this study and provides the details of the research design and methods used.

Purposes of the Study

The current study investigates how students responded to participation in an unsupervised debate forum platform, and seeks to determine whether or not they view this activity as actual debate and to what extent they feel it affected their ability to make stance-support statements.

Research Questions

In regard to the purposes of this paper, the following research questions were proposed:

1) Do students see the unsupervised debate forum as closer to actual debate than homework?

2) Do students perceive an improvement in their ability to express their own opinion after participating in an unsupervised online debate?

3) What feedback do students provide on the good points, bad points, and areas of possible improvement for the online debate forum?

Method

The study focused upon the analysis of feedback provided by Japanese university students after an unsupervised online debate forum. The debate forum was designed to be operated parallel with related course material that centered around presentation and debate in English. A post-debate questionnaire was conducted that allowed students to provide feedback on this activity. Data were later anonymized to remove all personally identifying information.

Participants and Data

First year Department of English students of a Japanese university were selected as participants for the study. There were fifty participants in total who provided data by responding to a questionnaire following the study. Two whole classes, consisting of fifty students in total, voluntarily participated in the study and were given the option to opt out at any time. The forums were set up by the two teachers of the classes and, aligning with the procedures of this study, they did not control the content of the students' writing in the forum. Students had already been classmates for a total of about fifty hours, and the language they used reflected their relationships

as classmates or friends. Students used their own names or easily identifiable nicknames while participating in the online forum.

Procedure

The study consisted of a four-step process that was conducted over a total period of two months. Each step is described in detail in this section.

Step one was the preparation for the debate forum, which was done during class time, and included students surveying their classmates' opinions regarding each other's statements. Students were also required to present the opinions they collected, along with any pros and cons of those opinions, to the rest of the class. Google Classroom spaces were created by the teachers, and twenty-five students from each of the two classes joined their respective spaces. Students decided on topic statements and these were collected by the teacher. The teacher divided the total number of student topic statements by the number of weeks in the semester (e.g., 50 topics/15 weeks = 3.33, practically three or four topics per week). All of the topics were created by the students. The teacher posted the students' topics for them in order to maintain a consistent number (three or four) of new topics on the debate forum each week. Students could have taken the responsibility of posting their topics themselves, but if multiple students forgot to post their topics, this could have led to extended periods of time on the debate forum with no new topics being posted. The format for posting student's topics is as follows: (Student's name)'s topic statement: "Smoking should be banned on campus."

Step two was the initiation of the debate forum. Students were informed of how many topics would be posted by the teacher each week starting on the first day. Students were asked to make at least five responses to each other's statements and comments. A schedule was provided for the students as to what topics would be posted for which week.

Step three was the maintenance of the forum until the end of the debate. This was done at the beginning of each week (one class a week). Teachers announced the topics that have been or will be posted. Students could have a brief debate of the posts made from the previous week. Teachers then reminded students to open up Google Classroom each day and check on their phone or on their computer. After this, teachers briefly reminded students to make at least five

contributions per week. If there were any students who do not include the name of the person they are replying to, a teacher reminded the students to do so in each response.

Step four was the post-debate questionnaire (See Appendix B) that allowed students to provide feedback towards this activity. Similar to Ekahitanond's, (2013) Likert five-point attitudinal questionnaire, a five-point design was used for a post-study survey after the Google Classroom debate forum. Students were able to mark values in between whole numbers, resulting in values that included fractions.

Obtaining Informed Consent

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from an ethics committee at the university where the debate forum was conducted. All elements of the debate forum were explained to the students before they were given the option to participate. Those who opted out of the debate forum were given an alternative to the debate forum that provided equivalent education. Students who provided consent were given the option to withdraw their consent and discontinue their participation in the debate forum and eliminate all data collected from them at any time.

Data Analysis: The Experiences of the Participants

In this section, the collected data is presented, analyzed, and discussed in relation to the research questions provided in the last section. Each of the research questions will be discussed in the same order they are listed above.

Research Question 1: Do students see the unsupervised debate forum as more of actual debate than homework?

To answer this question, students' attitudes towards the debate forum were assessed via a questionnaire at the end of the study. The questionnaire first asked students to rate, on a five-point scale, whether they saw the debate forum as more of a "debate" or "homework."

Figure 1

Student Responses to the Question "For You, Was This Activity More of a Debate or Homework?"
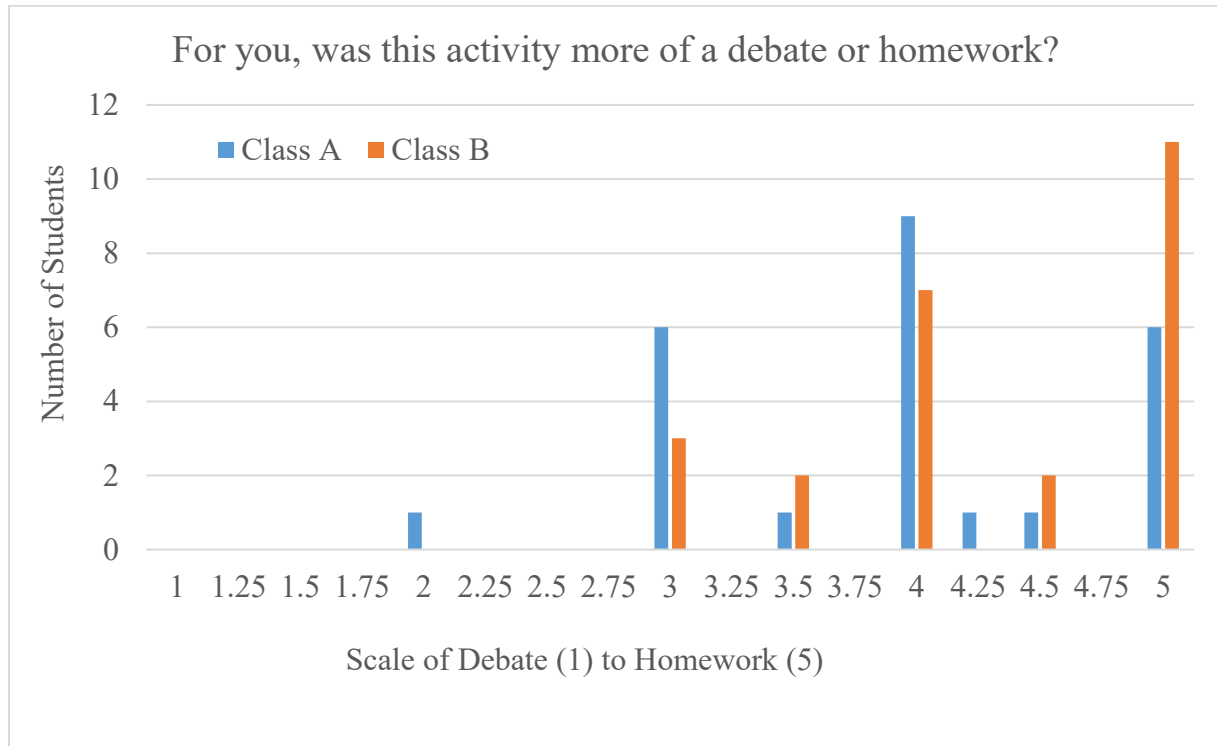
Students from Class A and Class B were considered as equivalent populations and the mean was calculated with all students in a single set. With the mean of the classes being 4.13, one can assume that the majority of the students saw the debate forum as more of "homework," rather than "debate." Student feedback will be shown later in the paper (Research Question 3) that provides an explanation for this. Perhaps due to this inability to view other participants' posts until after they have submitted a post themselves, students rarely replied to other's posts. A look at the sample posts (in Appendix A) shows us that many of the students may have had a lessened "debate" opinion, since the submission method may have appeared more as a homework submission, rather than a contribution to a debate forum where other students are replying to each other's posts. This also may have led to students contributing only the minimum number of responses since they felt that posting a response was required homework given by the teacher. Although the required nature of the homework had its drawbacks, questionnaires in a

previous study (Birch & Volkov, 2007) found that the predominant reason for non-participation in course debate forums across language groups in an ESL classroom was "being not required to do so," which was 38% of the whole class. This may suggest that the required nature of the debate forum may be a necessary component in order to promote a higher frequency of participation.

The frequency of students' posts did not change significantly over the course of the experiment, with most individuals posting an average of once per topic. There were very few incidences when students posted more than once, whether it was a direct response to the topic or a reply to their peers.

Research Question 2: Do students perceive an improvement in their ability to express their own opinion after participating in an unsupervised online debate?

The second part of the questionnaire asked students to rate on a five-point scale whether they saw an improvement in their ability to express their opinion after the debate forum.

Figure 2

Student Responses to the Question "Did the Google Classroom Debate Help You Get Better at Expressing Your Opinion?
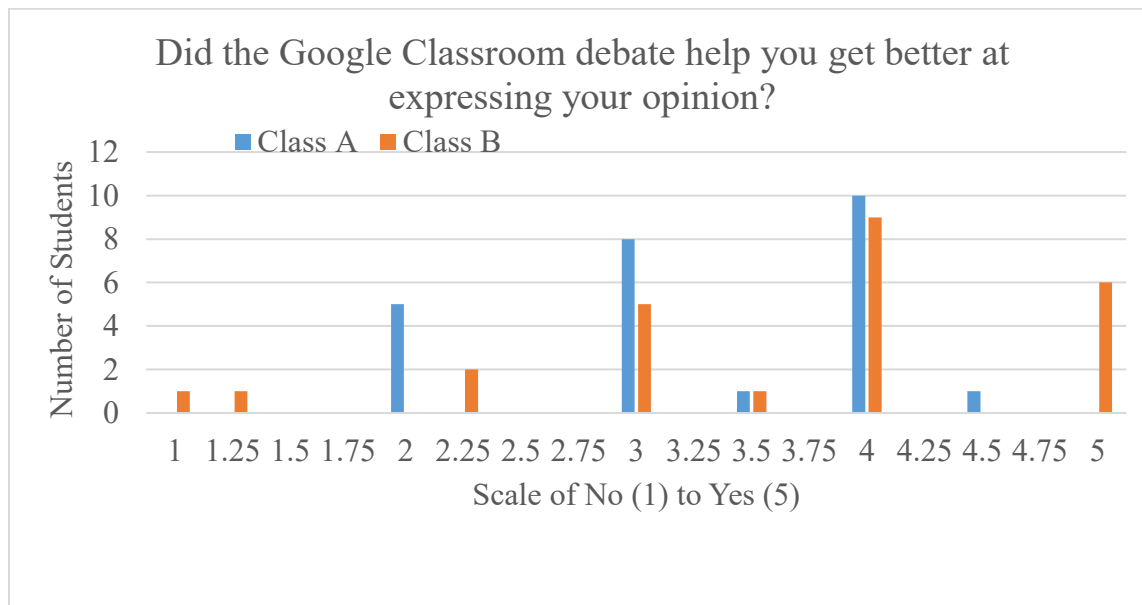
With the mean of the classes being 3.47, one can see that the majority of the students perceived an increase in their ability to express their opinion. The discussion of Research Question 3 will provide an explanation for this. Furthermore, this study did not measure the opinions of students in a regular in-class debate, which could be pursued in future research.

Research Question 3: What feedback do students provide on the good points, bad points, and areas of possible improvement for the online debate forum?

Following the first two parts of the post-debate questionnaire were three questions designed to elicit free feedback about what could be improved in the debate forum. These questions were, 1) What were the good points of Google Classroom? 2) What were the bad points of Google Classroom? 3) Please give your ideas for making an online class debate that is better than this one. The following section presents a table that categorizes all of the feedback given by the participants of the debate forum according to theme similarity. Feedback was sorted into categories shown in the tables below. One piece of feedback can have replies with several ideas and each idea is counted separately. A list of all of the unedited feedback in its original form is also provided in Appendix C along with identifying numbers.

There was a total of 164 comments with individual themes. There were three total comments that were either illegible or out-of-context and were not counted.

Table 1

Summary of Student Comments Regarding the Good Points of Google Classroom

Good points of google classroom comments	Total number of responses
Expression and sharing of opinions	43
English practice	14
Google Classroom platform aspects	10
Posting schedule	5
Total	72

The most common type of good point, "expression and sharing of opinions", might indicate that this is an opportunity missing from other classroom tasks. This type of comment by itself made up 60% of the total types of comments provided in this section.

Table 2

Summary of Student Comments Regarding the Bad Points of Google Classroom

Bad points of google classroom comments	Total number of responses
Google Classroom platform aspects	16
Not-like-debate aspects	13
Other's participation problems	11
Homework/hassle	9
English level difficulty	8
Total	*57*

The top two most common types of comments, which were "Google Classroom platform aspects" and "not-like-debate aspects" included comments that mentioned inherent negatives in the Google classroom platform and elements that made the debate forum feel "less like debate". There were aspects of the debate forum that did not match previous expectations of "debate". Together, these two categories made up 51% of the total types of comments in this section.

Table 3

Summary of student comments regarding the areas for improvement

Areas for improvement comments	Total number of responses
Change platform/aspects of platform	14
Change the number of topics/schedule	11
More/clearer instructions	5
Suggestion for different setup/rules	4
Total	34

The most frequent types of comments provided by the students, which was "change platform/aspects of platform," gave suggestions to fix problems in the Google Classroom platform as well as provide alternatives to the platform. One common suggestion for an alternative platform was LINE. The second most frequent type of comment, which was "change the number of topics/schedule," included suggestions to increase or decrease the number of topics provided in a certain time period, as well as suggestions to shorten or lengthen the amount of time provided to debate a set of topics. Together, these two types of comments made up 71% of the total types of comments in this section.

Conclusion

The study set out to investigate Japanese English learners' opinions towards online discussion, focusing specifically on their written feedback. This conclusion will begin by discussing limitations of the study focusing on the use of the Google Classroom platform and the ambivalent homework/free contribution nature of students' contributions. Finally, the findings of this study are explained.

A limitation of the study was the slightly supervised nature of the debate forum. This was due to teachers needing to remind students to post. This may have caused students to feel that the activity was obligatory and therefore "homework." The debate forum in general was managed to a degree by the teachers. Previous studies (Mazzolini & Maddison, 2005) have found that a prominent instructor's role in an online forum corresponded to lower rates of student participation. Although the online-debate forum was designed to be unsupervised, written reminders were handed out to students throughout the conduction of the debate forum. Advice as to how many posts should be posted may have contributed to the feeling of homework, which may have caused students to lose interest in the debate forum. Although students were only asked to participate and were not required to do so as their participation did not affect their grade in the class, many may have still felt an obligation to participate because of the teacher's weekly encouragement to post in the online-debate forum. Another solution may involve creating more incentives for students to participate. Previous research (Cohen & Miyake, 1986) that involved an "intercultural network" showed that when students were encouraged to use English functionally rather than for its own sake, the students' motivation to use English increased.

Future research could incorporate more incentives for students to shift their feeling of the debate forum from being "homework" to "debate."

An inherent limitation present in this study was the fact that Google Classroom does not allow students to view their peer's contributions to the forum until after the student has posted. This means that students would need to submit a reply to the main topic first, before their peers' posts would become visible. As other studies have pointed out (Yunus, Salehi, & Chenzi, 2012), the advantages of integrating social media into the ESL writing classroom include the ability for students to read comments of the entire class and comment directly and individually on their classmates' contributions in a medium that is familiar and comfortable. In future studies, other platforms such as LINE, which are more familiar to students and allows students to view all of the posts prior to contributing anything, may be a more viable medium for students to practice debate.

The study concludes that the majority of the students saw debate forum as mandatory homework, and felt an increase in their ability to express their opinion after the activity. Based on the most frequent types of feedback provided by students in the post-debate questionnaire, the following improvements to future debate forums are suggested at this stage. Negative points of the debate forum may be addressed by experimenting with different online platforms in order to provide students with a different debate environment for those who viewed certain aspects of the platform as negative or not-like-debate. Areas for improvement may include a completely autonomous debate forum where students can freely decide upon their own posting schedule and the number of posts they want to contribute should be experimented with in order to address a dissatisfaction with topic numbers and post schedule. All of these changes should be made while maintaining the ability for students to express and share their opinions with their classmates, which was viewed as a positive aspect of this study's debate forum by the majority of students.

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Stachus Peter Tu is originally from Montana in the United States. He is a doctoral student at Hiroshima Shudo University who teaches part-time at universities around Hiroshima. He occasionally gives presentations at the English Literary Society of Japan and the Japan Association for Language Teaching. His research interests include politeness, facework, and social media.

Appendix A

Examples

The following are examples of the debate with "higher engagement" and "lower engagement" respectively:

Higher engagement

13's statement: We need to pay money to park our bicycles.

9: I'm not sure. I think they park for short time, they don't have to pay.

6: It depends.

9: I disagree. We have only to pay money to park our cars.

20: I'm not sure. I don't think people will follow rules or the environment will improve when they have to pay for parking.

5: I agree. Its natural thing.

2: I agree

11: It depends, because it depends on the places.

12: I agree.

15: It depends. If we have bad manners on bicycle parking, we should make the rule that we need to pay money to park our bicycles.

17: I disagree. If we have free parking area, everyone park this place so city will be good more! We don't have to think about illegal dumping!

7: disagree

10: I'm not sure.

14: It depends. Because to pay each time is very tiresome.

13: I agree. Because bicycles are different from cars. We ride them in the sidewalks which means it's not assumed as cars.

19: I agree because illegal parking is big problem in Japan.

3: I agree. Because illegal parking is increasing.

5: It depends.

2: I don't agree

18: I disagree. I don't want to pay it.

4: It depends

6: I disagree. It causes more illegal parking.

Lower engagement

5's statement: We need more beautiful flowers on campus.

9: I'm not sure. I think there are many flowers on campus.

6: I agree. I think the beautiful flowers will help students refresh and relax.

5: me too

11: I agree, because flowers make our campus colorful.

15: I agree. If there are more flowers, our campus will become more beautiful and brightly.

17: I agree. Flowers are really beautiful so we can relax.

8: I agree. Because there are few beautiful flowers on campus.

13: I agree. It gets more glamorous.

3: It depends. Because we already have some flowers.

5: I agree. Because we can be happy.

18: I agree. Appearance is good.

4: I agree. it makes campus more beautiful

6: I disagree.

Appendix B

Post-debate questionnaire

For you, was this activity more of a debate or homework?

Debate   Homework

| | | | | |
1   2   3   4   5

Did the Google Classroom debate help you get better at expressing your opinion?

No   Yes

| | | | | |
1   2   3   4   5

What were the good points of Google Classroom?

-

-

-

What were the bad points of Google Classroom?

-

-

-

Please give your ideas for making an online class debate that is better than this one.

-

-

-

Appendix C

Student comments from questionnaire

"What were the good points of Google Classroom?"

Expression and sharing of opinions

1. よく考えたら自分の意見を公表できる。
2. 解答を返信してからみんなのアイデアを見れること。
3. 相手の意見など目で見れるので聞きがさない
4. 自分の考えを表現できる
4. 相手の考え方がわかる
4. 疑問点がみつかる
5. 皆の意見がわかる。
6. 自分の意見が言える。
7. いろんな人の意見を見ることができる
9. We can see other's opinions.
10. I can share some ideas easily.
11. feel free to speak
12. We can share our real opinions.
13. みんなとコミュニケーションをとれた。
14. 話したことない人と話す機会がある
15. みんなのいけんがきけた。
17. I can saw good opinion and bad opinion.
18. みんなの意見が見れる。
19. 自分の意見をはっきりと言える
20. I can expressing my opinion in my class.
21. We can exchange our own opinion.
21. We can communicate with other people.

27. 自分の意見をまとめられるところ。
27. 他の人の意見を見ることができるところ。
29. いろんな人の意見が一度にみられれる。
29. クラスメートの交流！
31. 皆の意見がみれる
32. Discuss with many people
33. I can know my friend's opinions.
36. We can know the other's idea.
38. みんなの意見が分かる
39. コミュニケーション力が身につく
41. 色んな人の意見を聞くことが出来る。（見ることができる）
42. I can also know other's opinion.
42. It is the good time to express my opinion.
42. Easy to say my opinion
44. みんな意見を見ることができる。
45. I can exchange opinions everyone
46. I can know everyone ideas at the same time.
46. I can know how everyone think of their problems.
48. みんなが意見を書ける
49. 色んな意見を知れる
50. We can practice to express our opinion, so I can choose suitable work.

English practice
8. 自分で考えて英語をかける

12. We can motivate each other in our English.

16. 文を作る力がつく

22. 自分の意見を英語で表せることが出来たこと。

28. I can get an opportunity to use English.

33. I can express my opinion in English.

34. 英文をかく力がつく。

35. 英文を自ら考える力が身につく

38. 文法が身につく

38. 新しい単語を覚えることができる

39. 文法の勉強ができる。

41. 文法的なミスしないように注意深く英文を作ることが出来る。

47. Increase our vocabulary.

49. 英語力がつく

Google Classroom platform aspects

2. ケータイを使ってなので返信が簡単にできた。

19. 他の人の意見に流されることはない。

23. We can check my classmate's opinion.

25. 直接じゃなくても話せる

30. スマートフォンでできる

31. クラスメートと交流しやすい

39. 携帯で友達の意見を知ることができる。

40. スマホでいつでもできる

44. wifi がなくてもできる。

44. 画面が見やすかった。

Posting schedule

3. 自分のペースでできる。

10. I can show my ideas whenever I like.

24. very easy.

31. いつでも討論できる

41. 気軽に出来る。（投稿）

"What were the bad points of Google Classroom?"

Google Classroom platform aspects

2. 自分の解答に対して誰かが反応してくれているかどうか全くわからないこと。
例えば、K さん質問を返した後　再度見返さないと反応があるかがわからない
→数が多いので１回１回見返すのは不可能。（？）ラインのようにメッセージが来たという返信があれば良いと思った、

7. クラスに入るのにログインなどがあり、なかなか入らなくなる

18. 誰が参加しているか分からないから回答しずらい。

22. みんなの意見が集まらない

23. We can't see other classmate's opinion before I write my opinion.

24. appear same person.

27. 一度出したらやり直しができない所。

29. グーグルクラスルームからのメールの量がすごい。

30. 自分が書いたところがどこか分からない

31. 使いづらい

38. ページを開くのに時間がかかる。

38. 質問とコメントのページが違う。

39. ページ開くまでに時間がかかる。

44. メールが来ない時があった。

44. アプリを入れないと、サイトを開けなかったこと。

44. 開くのに時間がかかること。

Not-like-debate aspects

6. もう少し議論できるお題がほしい。

17. Too many questions.

20. Not discussion.

26. 同じことがかぶる

31. 意見が一方的になりがらち？

31. 討論の熱がない

33. I didn't have much awareness of discussion.

38. 答えがかぶる

39. 先にやった人の答えをまねする。

39. 答えがかぶることがある。

41. 投稿数にバラつきがあり、皆の意見が分からなかった。

47. Can't face to face

48. 全員の意見が見れるのでかたよる。

Other's participation problems

3. みんながやらないと楽しくない

4. 他人をきずつけてしまう時がある

10. Some people didn't submit their ideas, so I couldn't share ideas with all of my classmates.

11. Someone didn't mention in the Google Classroom so I couldn't collete enough information.

13. 人が多くて大変だった。

16. ひとりだけでできない。

16. みんなやらないとやろうと思う人がいない（みんなしない）

19. 自分の意見を言ったら特に他の人とはなすことなく終わってしまう。

21. Take long time to answer the opinion each other.

32. Sometimes forgot to do this

42. quite busy, so I sometimes forgot to do it.

Homework/hassle

1. たまる。宿題感があるので。

9. I felt it's a kind of task on the phone.

12. We felt like it was a task we must do.

15. すこし手間だった。

28. It is little interesting.

34. 義務感があった。

43. めんどくだい

45. I little boring

50. It is boring little bit.

English level difficulty

14. 英語はなせない人が困る

25. 伝わりづらい

41. 英語を打たないといけないのが大変であった。

41. 文法のミスなどが分からないため、時々困った。

42. quite hard

42. difficult to type English.

49. 分かりにくい。

49. イマイチ文法が分からない。

"Please give your ideas for making an online class debate that is better than this one."

Change of platform/aspects of platform

21. 皆の意見が自分が答えてからじゃないと見れないので、常に表示してもらいたい。

22. みんなの意見が届くようにする。

27. 書き直しができるようにする。

27. 意見を書く時に質問が見えるようにする。

30. 使いやすくしてほしい

31. みんなの意見をもっとみやすくしてほしい

34. 1つのコメントに何人も一斉にコメントを書くより LINE みたいな感じで討論できたらより取り組みやすかった

38. コメント欄の上に質問内容を表示する

39. ページ開く時間ともう少し速くする。

39. 自分の答えをうつ時に質問も見えるようにする。

41. 統計的にどうなっているのかを見たい時もあったのでデータ化する機能があればいいなと思った。

41. 紙に書いたものを投稿（写真などで）できるシステムもあったら良いと思った。

44. 開いたらすぐコメントできるようにしてほしい。

49. 回答済のものを分かりやすくしてほしい。

Change the number of topics/schedule

2. 私達は各個人のディベートについての内容を３０個ほど答える形でしたが、月に２〜３回大きな内容を扱えばディスカッションらしくなると思いました。

4. 1つ質問でなく、複数の質問をすべきだと思います。

6. 一つのお題に対して具体例をふまえて議論するといいと思います。

16. 週に１回１つのテーマとかをきめてやる

17. I want more a bit question

18. もっと課題があれば、みんなが利用してくれると思う。

19. 1つのトピックについてもっと長い時間をかけてディスカッションすればいいと思う。

24. more easy and fashonable topic.

31. 時間をもうけてやってみる。

42. I think that we have to discuss only one question.

43. 一つの意見に対して討論する方がよかったと思う（LINE みたいな感じで）

More/clearer instructions

1. わからない

3. 今回全員がやり方を理解してなかったように思う。

9. It didn't have no restriction, I think, so not every one remember to do it including me, It can't collect everyone's opinion.

25. わからない

41. 文法のミスのチェックをしてほしい。

Suggestion for different setup/rules

11. もっと皆が参加するようになればいいと思います。

14. 助け合い

33. I want to feel we do discussion more.

37. ただひたすらに義務になっていた印象がある。それと、クラススコアづけてほしくない。

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In the Classroom

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Building Fluency through Repeated Listening of Movie Scenes

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Quick Guide

Keywords: listening, fluency, dialogue, movies

Learner English level: High beginner and above

Learner maturity: Junior high school and above

Preparation time: 15-30 minutes

Activity time: 30-50 minutes per presentation pair

Materials: Projector and screen or individual smartphones, Wi-Fi/DVD player/USB

A quick look at an English learner's study notebook will often reveal page after page of words copied multiple times. Many students use this technique to help them commit the spelling and meaning of new words to memory. Listening ability can be improved in a similar manner by repeated listening of the same material. Listening is usually included as part of a general English curriculum but students lack ideas on how to improve their listening ability.

Listening materials that accompany textbooks are often less expressive and unnatural compared with dialogues in movies. Using movie scenes allows students to hear more natural

English with a greater range of expression. In addition, the visual aspect allows students to see gestures and expressions that accompany the spoken language. When students know they will be asked to do a dramatic activity with the movie scene, they listen more carefully to timing, volume, intonation and expression. This activity guides students from relying on subtitles to committing the dialogue to memory thus building listening and comprehension skills and improving dramatic expression.

Preparation

Step 1: Choose a short (1-4 minutes) scene from a popular movie with Japanese subtitles that most students are familiar with. You may want to ask students in an earlier lesson which movies they have seen. Popular children's movies and classic animation are a good choice.

Step 2: Decide whether students will watch on their own devices if the scene is web accessible or prepare the scene to be shown on a projector with a DVD or USB. A DVD is recommended because you will need to be able to show the scene in 3 formats; with Japanese subtitles, with English subtitles and without subtitles.

Procedure

Step 1: Show the scene with Japanese subtitles. It may be necessary to provide background information such as the backstory, character names and relationships. Students should focus on understanding the scene in Japanese. Repeat if necessary.

Step 2: Show the scene with English subtitles. This step can be repeated 2 or 3 times or more if necessary. Move on to the next step when you feel the students are no longer relying on and reading the subtitles.

Step 3: Show the scene again without any subtitles; repeat 1 or 2 times.

Step 4: Turn off the video and play only the audio. Ask students to visualize the scene as they listen. Ask some questions such as: Who is speaking now? Where is he going? What is he doing? Who is he talking to? What will happen next? Repeat 1 or 2 more times.

Additional Activities

Students should watch/listen for a combined total of 8-10 times from steps 1-4. At this point you can choose to do one of the following activities depending on the complexity of the scene you have chosen and the ability of your students. Each activity focuses on a different aspect of performance.

Activity A: Play the video with no audio and ask students to try to write down the dialogue from the visual clues. Pause the video as necessary to allow students time to write. This activity allows the teacher to see how much the students are able to accurately hear and recall dialogue, a skill that they will need to be able to do before performing.

Activity B: Play the video with no audio and have the class say the lines of the dialogue. Allowing all members to speak simultaneously alleviates performance anxiety. Students should be encouraged to experiment with dramatic vocal expression, volume and timbre.

Activity C: Play the video with no audio and assign character roles to individuals or small groups and have them say the lines. Assigning roles requires the speaker to listen carefully to each other to improve their dramatic timing.

Activity D: Play only the audio and have the students lip-synch the lines while acting out the scene in front of the class. Speaking a foreign language expressively and physical performance are two separate skill sets. Lip-synching allows students to focus on the physical aspects of performance with no need to worry about recalling dialogue and vocal expression.

Conclusion

This activity shows students how to use subtitles in movies for improving their listening ability. They first understand the scene with Japanese subtitles, then with English subtitles, progressing to listening only in English. Finally, they are able to visualize the scene, recall dialogue and perform a dramatic activity based on the movie scene.

Deanna Clause has been teaching in Gunma for over half her life. She currently teaches engineering and medical students at Gunma University. She uses her background in theatre in the university classroom to help students build presentation skills and gain confidence in public speaking.

Written Debate: Arguing on Paper

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Quick Guide

Keywords: Writing, debate, competition, grammar

Learner English level: Low intermediate and above

Learner maturity: High school and above

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Activity time: 15-45 minutes

Materials: Paper, writing utensils, a timer (a timer that all can see is ideal, but if students can't view the timer that's not a problem)

Nothing like a bit of competition to motivate students. This activity injects the competitive spirit of debate into writing. Teams of students write arguments about a topic and then swap them with opposing teams. Teams gets point if they find grammar or syntax mistakes in the other team's writing. They then attempt to write a refutation. Papers get swapped and the process is repeated. Each stage is timed and points given. There is minimal preparation and set-up, so this activity can

be used on the spur-of-the-moment. It is particularly useful for adding a bit of energy to a writing class and can be adjusted to suit various levels.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare possible topics. Topics that allow teams to be divided into groups "for" and "against" are best. For example, *Japan should restart its nuclear power plants*, or *J-Pop is better than K-Pop*. These topics can then be written on pieces of paper or put on the board. For the ultra-minimal prep version, the topics can simply be dictated to the teams.

Step 2: Bring enough paper for each team of 2-3 students to have one or two pieces. Alternatively, handouts can be made with ruled sections for students to write arguments and counterarguments with a box for awarding points adjacent to each section.

Step 3: Teams will write in different colors. Most students will have different colored pens, but in case they don't, the instructor may wish to have some to give out.

Procedure

Step 1: Divide the class into teams of 2-4 students. In larger classes where the instructor cannot monitor all of the groups, assign one student as the "judge" for each pair of teams.

Step 2: Pass out one or two pieces of paper to each team.

Step 3: Assign a topic to each pair of teams. (All pairs of teams can use the same topic or a different topic can be given to each pair.)

Step 4: *Argument Phase* - Teams are given 2-3 minutes to write their first arguments either supporting or opposing the debate topic. (Each team writes in their team color throughout the debate. The time and number of sentences can be adjusted to match students' levels)

Step 5: *Correction Phase* - Teams then swap papers and the correction phase begins. Teams are given 1-2 minutes to find any grammar or syntax errors. Teams get 1 point for each mistake they

find, and 1 point for each mistake they correct. The teacher or judge checks these and assigns points.

Step 6: *Refutation Phase* – Once correction phase points have been awarded, the refutation phase begins. Teams get 2-3 minutes to write a refutation against the other team's argument.

Step 7: *Refutation Points Phase* – At the end of the Refutation Phase, the teacher or judge reads the refutations and awards 0-3 points depending on the strength of the argument.

Step 8: Repeat steps 5-7. Students continue to correct the refutations and write counter arguments, with points being given at each stage, until the teacher decides to end that "round" of the debate.

Step 9: Points are tallied and winners decided. The process can then be repeated with another topic.

Conclusion

Students tend to participate eagerly in the debates thanks to the timed phases and point system. It is relatively quick moving and active for a writing activity. Writing as a team allows for cooperation and teambuilding. Students are surprisingly enthusiastic when trying to find errors. With error recognition being a laborious, frustrating activity for most students, this is a refreshing change of pace.

Philip Norton has over 15-years EFL teaching experience at Japanese universities. He has published two poetry collections, co-edited *Short Fuse: A Global Anthology of New Fusion Poetry* (Rattapalax, 2002), and released numerous spoken-word and music tracks. He received two Australian national poetry awards and is working on a new collection.

Writing a Screenplay: Using Drama in the Classroom

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Quick Guide:

Keywords: Task Based Language Teaching, group projects, graded readers, intensive reading, CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning)

Learner English level: Intermediate to advanced (CEFR A2-C2)

Learner maturity level: Middle school to adult

Preparation time: NA

Activity time: 7-14 weeks

Materials: Graded reader(s)/literary text, handouts, Google documents, LINE

Activity Overview

The goal of a communication class is to increase students' ability across the five skills and the ability to respond to real-life situations. How many times can you teach someone how to introduce themselves or give directions before it becomes tedious? Oscar Wilde has been quoted as saying, "life imitates art more than art imitates life" (Wilde, 1905). Drawing on the rich literary history of the English language and the convenience of graded readers, you can create something much more memorable. Keeping this in mind, I will share a way to incorporate writing a screenplay into your classroom over either a 7-week and 14-week period.

Preparation

Choosing a text & creating materials

First, choose a graded reader/text that is suitable for your students' proficiency. Check the story for its length and that it has an appropriate amount of action. Look online at eltbooks.com,

https://english-e-reader.net (free), or at your local library. Choose multiple texts or a collection of short stories if the class is large.

Procedure

7 weeks

Groups

Make your class into groups of four or five. Assign each group a story or part of story to write.

Communication and editing

Use Google Docs so students can edit in real time while you keep track of their progress. Make LINE groups including yourself to help students communicate easily. A template is included in the appendices.

Consequence creators

Create comprehension questions for quizzes, and have students write a summary of the story. There is a *Story Map* handout that is included in the appendices that is very useful for students to understand the setting, characters, problems, plot/events, and make predictions about what will happen next.

Screenplay

The screenplay should be written with a narrator who tells the audience extraneous details and what action is going on in the story, and characters with different speaking roles. All action by the characters should be included as notes in the document. A sample scene has been included in the appendices.

Performance

Students will need time to rehearse and build sets (use chairs, desks, and the whiteboard). I gave students 20 minutes in class every week. If you are worried about students using their L1 during this time make a handout of useful phrases for code switching (Appendix D). The final performance is on the last day of normal classes.

14 Weeks

Expanded activities and scaffolds

Students should make vocabulary lists and do separate roleplays or improvisations of the characters. If you are using a longer text then I recommend assigning reading homework, and have in-class discussions if the material is deep enough.

Projects

Over the course of a semester have students make character profiles and give presentations about them. Leading up to the final performance have students make a radio drama (that is the same as the story or concerned with it) using audio recordings.

Conclusion

When using a literary text as your focus the possible activities you can create for it are only limited by your imagination. Using a literary text and having students write a screenplay allows students to not only learn realistic usage of language, but makes them put it into their own words. A variety of activities surrounding a literary text can help students improve in all of the skills.

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Donny Sparrow has been a teacher in Japan for 8 years now. He was an *eikaiwa* teacher first and then later moved on to ALT work at the elementary and middle school level. For the last 3 years, he has been a part of the staff at Kyoto Sangyo University. He is also the Publicity Chair of Kyoto JALT and has been active in the chapter for the past year and a half. He just recently joined the PIE SIG and is looking forward to being more active in it.

Appendix A

Google Doc Template

Class

Group #

Story:

Screenplay Pages (each student writes 2-3 pages)

Name	Page #

Comprehension Questions

1. The Speckled Band

    ○ At what age did Julia die? (Name)

        ■ Answer:

    ○ What does Dr. Roylott have at the house that people are scared of? (Name)

        ■ Answer:

    ○ What is the speckled band? Why did Dr. Roylott die? (Name)

        ■ Answer:

2. A Scandal in Bohemia

    ○ Who is Count von Kramm really? (Name)

        ■ Answer:

    ○ What does Irene Adler have that the King wants? (Name)

        ■ Answer:

    ○ Did the King get what he wanted? Why or why not? (Name)

        ■ Answer:

3. The Five Orange Pips

    ○ Where did Uncle Elias live when he was younger? (Name)

        ■ Answer:

    ○ What does K.K.K. stand for? Why did they want to kill Uncle Elias? (Name)

        ■ Answer:

        ■ Did The Star get home to Georgia, USA? Why? Why not? (Name)

        ■ Answer:
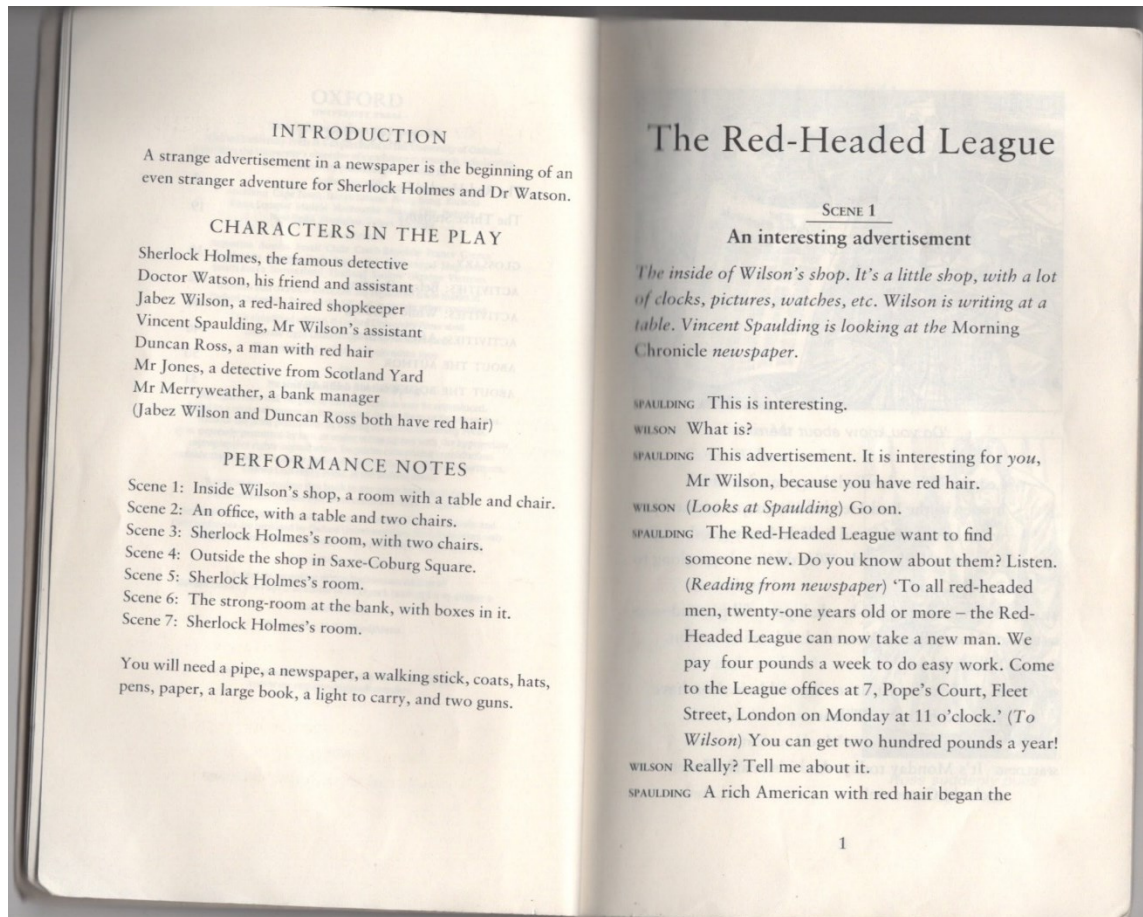
Introduction

Characters in the Play

Performance Notes (Where is each scene? Who is in each scene?

Scene 1:

Scene 2:

Scene 3:

Scene 4:

Scene 5:

Scene 6:

Scene 7:

Start your screenplay below this line---

Appendix B

Sample Screenplay Scene

The 5 Orange Pips

Scene 1: Holmes' House

    (It's a rainy night and Watson and Sherlock Holmes are sitting around the fireplace while the storm rages outside)

Narrator: In the summer of 1887 Dr. Watson is visiting his friend Sherlock Holmes. It is a stormy night and they are sitting by the fire when suddenly there is a knock at the door

Watson: (looks at Holmes) Who can this be!?

Holmes: If he comes on business in this weather it's important. Come in! (Holmes calls out loudly)

Openshaw: (opens the door and comes inside, he looks very tired) I've come to ask for help…

End Scene

Appendix C

Story Map Hand Out

Group Name:
Member Names: _____ Date _____

Story Map 1

Write notes in each section.

Setting:
Time:

↓

Characters:

↓

Problem:

⬇ ↔ | Plot/Events: |
|---|

Prediction(s):

Appendix D

Code Switching Hand-out Example Phrases

Group Work and Rehearsal Phrase Sheet

What do you think about…

- ○ ○○について、どう思う？（or 思いますか？ or お考えですか？）

- Could you please…

  - ○ 〜をしていただけますか？（do＋名詞）

  - ○ 〜ていただけますか？（動詞）

  - ○ 〜してもらえますか？

- How about…

  - ○ 〜はどうですか？

  - ○ 〜はどう？

- How do I say _____ in English?

  - ○ 英語で〜〜って、どう言うの？

  - ○ 英語で〜〜とは、どう言うのですか？

  - ○ 〜って、英語で何て言うの？

- What does _____ mean in Japanese?

  - ○ 〜〜は日本語でどういう意味？

- What do you mean?

  - ○ どういう意味ですか？

  - ○ どういうこと？

- I think…

  - ○ 私は〜〜だと思う

  - ○ 〜〜だと、私は思う

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